

Asia Harvest



Swing the Sickle for the Harvest is Ripe! (Joel 3:13)

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Auguste Chapdelaine
- CHINA MARTYR -

From the Frontlines

with Paul & Joy Hattaway

"Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. If you say, "But we knew nothing about this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person according to what he has done?" (Proverbs 24:11-12).

In recent years, and especially since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in America, it seems that many Christians in Western nations have become more inward-focused. This may be a natural tendency for people to do when under attack, but it can have tragic consequences for the kingdom of God.

Instead of focusing on our own needs, our own church, or even our own country, we need to maintain the vision that God wants all His children to have - a world-wide vision. Jesus encouraged us to "open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35). When our eyes are focused on ourselves and our own needs, we will not be able to see the harvest.

In many of our newsletters we write testimonies of tremendous miracles and outbreaks of revival that are occurring in Asia. This can sometimes give an unbalanced perception that all of Asia is experiencing showers of God's blessing, when that is certainly not the case at all. Still today dozens of countries in Asia remain less than 1% Christian. That means, tragically, that 99 out of every 100 people in those nations remain desperately lost in their sin and heading for eternity in hell. We have personally travelled through remote areas of Asia, such as in Tibet, where for weeks we have not seen a single sign of Christianity or met any individual who has ever heard the Name of Jesus before. Total darkness abounds.

Jesus Christ has not returned to the earth because the work of His kingdom is not yet complete. There are many that He still longs to come into his sheepfold, that they might have life and give glory to the Father. God loves the lost more than we can comprehend. The Scriptures tell us "He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Instead of just focusing on the 1% that are safe, the heart of Jesus was always for the 99% that are not. In fact, even if these figures are reversed and 99 are saved, His

Cover Picture: A sketch showing Auguste Chapdelaine being tortured just prior to his martyrdom in 1856.

heart would still be to seek and save the one that was lost! Jesus taught, "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent" (Luke 15:4-7).

Let's not just sing about the harvest field, let's win it for Jesus!

Jesus instructed his servants to "occupy until I come" (Luke 19:13, KJV). This doesn't mean sit around and do nothing, but to be busy following Christ's commands and doing all we can to see the Father glorified in all the earth.

It must look strange in heaven that so many millions of Christians are sitting on their backsides waiting for Jesus to come again, while there are more than two billion people in the world perishing without having heard that He has come the first time!

Many Christians today are addicted to hearing all the teaching they can about Bible prophecy, as one teacher after another promotes conflicting predictions about what they believe will happen in the last days before Jesus returns for His bride. These teachers advocate various political theories on Israel, Iraq, the Middle East, America.... Strangely, however, they almost always seem to miss the one key indicator that Jesus said would happen just prior to His Second Coming.

In Matthew 24, the disciples came to Jesus secretly on the Mount of Olives and asked him, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (v.3). Jesus gave a long description of the things that would take place before the end of the age, including the appearance of many false Christs, wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, famines, and a widespread persecution of Christians in which many would be put to death.

Yet these were still not the final thing that will happen before He returns. All these things are merely "the beginning of birth pains" (v.8). So what was the final indication Jesus told us would have to take place before His Coming? Read carefully.... "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (v.14).

There are countless millions of people in Asia and other parts of the world today who have never received a "testimony" of the gospel of the kingdom. They live and die, and go before the judgment seat of Christ dressed in filthy rags. The heart of God grieves over the condition of the lost, but He also grieves over the condition of a backslidden Church that cares more about its own image and needs than for the salvation of a lost world. May we be faithful to obey God's command to preach the Gospel to all of mankind!

CHINA MARTYRS: Auguste Chapdelaine - 1856

The following article is taken from Paul Hattaway's upcoming book, *China's Christian Martyrs*, which will profile hundreds of inspirational testimonies of those who have died for Jesus Christ in China.



This year marks 150 years since the martyrdom of a little-known French missionary, Auguste Chapdelaine, in a remote part of China. He was put to death along with five Chinese believers, including Bai Xiaomin and Cao Guiying. While researching and writing these testimonies I found myself greatly inspired and would like to share them with you in the hope they will also encourage you.

Auguste Chapdelaine was born in 1814, the youngest of nine children. From an early age he felt called to serve Christ, but his parents opposed him, saying they needed him to work on the family farm instead. He obeyed his parents' wishes until two of his brothers suddenly died. These incidents forced Chapdelaine to urgently reconsider his life's vocation, and his parents finally approved.

As Chapdelaine matured as a follower of Christ he became the pastor of a local church, and later a strong desire arose in his heart to serve God in China. After a lengthy struggle with church leaders who thought it was more necessary for him to stay at home, Chapdelaine was finally sent out as a missionary with the Paris Foreign Missionary Society in 1852, and was assigned to join a small mission already working in the southern Chinese province of Guangxi.

Just three days into his journey Chapdelaine was robbed of all his belongings by thieves on the West River and was forced to turn back. When he finally reached Guangxi, one of the other missionaries welcomed him and later wrote,

"When Chapdelaine came in sight of his

promised land, he threw himself on his knees to thank God for having brought him to the place of his inheritance, and offering himself to Him once more, he consecrated his whole power and life to labor in the glorious work which was entrusted to him. The fruits he produced soon corresponded to his zeal. After two years' work he could reckon about two hundred converts."

In 1856 the French missionary was ministering in Xilin, a small town in western Guangxi which was home to approximately 300 Christians, most of whom were members of the Miao ethnic minority group. They had already encountered much persecution from the authorities, who considered them traitors for following "the foreign religion."

Two soldiers were ordered to arrest Chapdelaine on February 24, 1856. Afraid that the Christians would defend their leader, the soldiers gathered together a mob of about 100 ruffians "armed with long pikes and large knives, besides other weapons." Eyewitnesses later testified that the day before the arrest, "There appeared in the air a cross of light, surrounded by a brilliant crown, which seemed to hang over the village and was visible alike to pagan and Christian. The pagans considered it unfavorable, but the Christians, on the contrary saw in it new evidence that the crown was only to be reached by means of the cross, and therefore with redoubled prayers prepared themselves for every trial to which it might please God to subject them."

Local believers had heard about the approaching soldiers and encouraged Chapdelaine to escape. He replied, "If I

leave, you will suffer for it. To save you from greater harm, I must stay with you."

After much fervent insistence by the local Christians, Chapdelaine agreed to take refuge in the home of a respected citizen, Luo Gongye. Despite this man's pleadings, his guest was arrested on February 26, along with five Chinese believers. Chapdelaine was falsely accused of stirring up the people to rebel against the government. There was a widespread Hui Muslim uprising taking place across many parts of China at the time, and part of the reason behind the missionary's arrest was that the authorities could not tell the difference between Christians and Muslims.

Chapdelaine was bound and taken to appear before the magistrate. He was told to renounce his faith, to which he replied, "My religion is the true religion and I cannot betray it. I have done no evil, but only persuaded people to do good and win eternal life in heaven."

The magistrate was unimpressed and locked Chapdelaine in a cangue—a cage for prisoners in which they are suspended by the head and hands through holes in the top and sides, causing severe pain and discomfort. Before being secured inside the torture-device, Chapdelaine was severely flogged and tormented with knives. The magistrate also ordered him "to receive a hundred blows on the cheeks with a cruel thong of leather. One stroke was enough to draw blood, so that a hundred, administered with all the force that fanaticism and revenge could inspire, must have entirely broken the jaws, knocked out the teeth of the glorious martyr. Being thus rendered incapable of speaking and an-

swering, he received three hundred blows on the back with a cane."

The faithful missionary tried to imitate his Lord and Savior by enduring his punishment in silence. The torturer believed Chapdelaine's silence and apparent lack of pain was due to magic and ordered a dog to be sacrificed and the blood poured over the

one moment he was unable to stir and he was walking with ease the next. Chapdelaine answered with a smile: 'It is the good God who protects and blesses me.'"

Attributing Chapdelaine's miraculous recovery to magic powers, the magistrate secured the priest's bloodied and torn body



A sketch of Chapdelaine being tortured inside a cangue before a crowd of onlookers.

captive in an attempt to break whatever spell the missionary had conjured up. By the end of the torture Chapdelaine was almost dead, and he was dragged back to the prison cell. One account from the time testifies that,

"It was impossible for him to walk a step. But by the merciful goodness of God, he was shortly afterwards able to rise and walk, as if he was in perfect health. The officers who witnessed this new miracle came up to enquire how it was that at

inside the cangue for further punishment. He died during the night of February 29, 1856.

Seeing that he was dead, the authorities decided to behead him anyway as a warning to the people not to follow the Christian religion. The head was hung in a tree near the city as a public spectacle. Even then the demonic insults did not stop, as "boys and passers by knocked it down with stones, so that it was seen rolling about in

the dust and mud, until it was devoured by the unclean animals, who fought for the fragments of it."

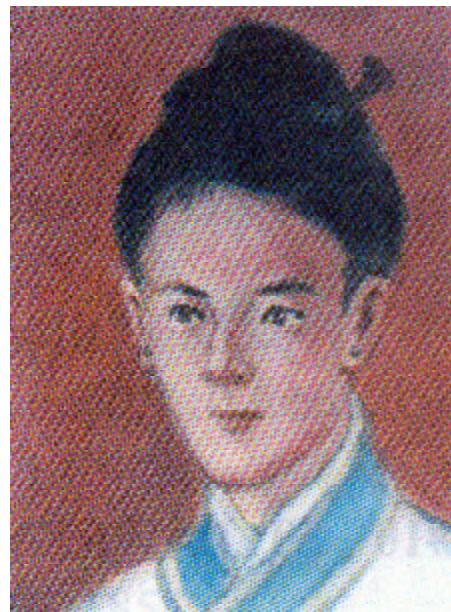
A shocked Europe was aghast at the news of Chapdelaine's cruel murder. Various newspapers and magazines gave much column space to the details of his martyrdom. At the time, before camera had been invented, his story was made more famous by the publication of two sketches by A. J. Woolmer, depicting the torture Chapdelaine had endured prior to his death.

The impact of Auguste Chapdelaine's life and death could still be felt almost 150 years after his death! As recently as the year 2000, the Communist government issued a statement demonizing the memories of many of China's Christian martyrs and distorting many facts to try to make the martyrs as perverse as their own hearts. Of Chapdelaine they said, "He collaborated with corrupt local officials, raped women and was notorious in those areas.... It was also known that he cohabited with an attractive widow by the name of Cao, and induced other pretty women to join the church so that he could fool around with them." The slanderous accusations were even more vile. The Chinese authorities never released a single document to support their dirty claims. Much evidence exists that shows Chapdelaine was a man of God, humble and self-sacrificial in his dealings with his fellow men.

Chapdelaine no longer cares. He is safe in the arms of Jesus Christ, who has promised his children, "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, be-

cause great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matt. 5:11-12).

Cao Guiying



Five Chinese believers were arrested with Chapdelaine and later executed. Among them was a 33-year-old woman named Cao Guiying.

Cao was born in 1821 in the village of Wujiazhai, Guizhou Province. She came from a strong Christian family that had migrated into the area generations before in search of a better life.

When Cao's parents died she went to the town of Xingyi where a kind old Christian woman allowed her to stay in her home. Cao was encouraged her to learn as much as she could about Christianity at a local

church. She learned the tenets of the faith quickly, and found her heart warmed to the prospect of a relationship with Christ.

In 1839, when she was aged just 18, Cao married a local farmer. The man's family never accepted the young lady as part of their own. Frequently she was left nothing to eat and was treated as an outsider. Just two years after the marriage Cao found herself a widow when her husband suddenly died. She got small jobs around the town in order to survive, and all the time she hungered for more knowledge of God in order to cultivate her own spiritual life. After the French missionary Chapdelaine heard about her, he asked her to consider moving to Guangxi Province where there was a growing church full of women who needed help and teaching. In the winter of 1852 she journeyed south to the town of Bajiazhai in Xilin County, where she helped the 30 to 40 tribal families living there. Cao Guiying taught the women how to cook and other simple chores, and she humbled herself to serve the families by engaging in menial tasks such as baby-sitting and cleaning house. Cao was dearly loved by all who came into contact with her. One of the missionaries said that Cao was,

"Endowed with a virtue which was superior to every trial, gentle, modest, and always satisfied either with good or evil fortune, she thought of nothing but of winning souls to God, and directing them in the way of salvation. Thus did she prepare herself by the discharge of the duties of her state, for fighting the battle of the Lord with heroic faith."

In 1856 Cao Guiying was in Yaoshan, a small village near Xilin, when she was ar-

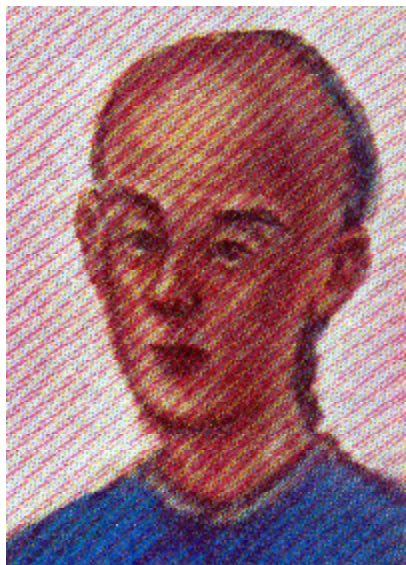
rested along with 14 other believers. A mob of one hundred ruffians "dispersed itself over the village, broke into all the houses, plundering and robbing everything without mercy. Oxen, goats, poultry, and bales of cotton, with which the country abounds, all became the prey of these devastators, who only left the Christians a little maize and rice, that they might not die of hunger."

The arrested Christians were taken to a local temple where they were tortured and interrogated. All the local believers were soon released, but Cao was kept in a filthy prison cell all alone. The local magistrate summoned Cao before him and attempted to manipulate her with his questions. The corrupt man slanderously insinuated that she had immoral relations with Auguste Chapdelaine, which she vehemently refuted.

"Her faith was not to be conquered, for, neither the promises, the threats, nor the curses which the brutal mandarin heaped upon her, nor the sight of the punishments which he barbarously brought before her, were able to weaken even for a moment her resolution to dedicate herself entirely to God, and to remain faithful to Him to the last moment of her life."

According to a reliable account, on February 27, 1856, the magistrate had Cao Guiying "locked in a cage so small that she could only stand up, but her spirit never failed. She prayed repeatedly, 'God have mercy on me; Jesus, save me!' Then, on March 4, she cried out with a loud voice: 'God help me!'

Bai Xiaomin



Bai Xiaomin came from an extremely poor family, a situation exacerbated when both his parents died when Bai was still a young boy. He was forced to hire himself out as a laborer in order to get food to survive.

In 1851 Bai moved to Yaoshan village in Xilin County, Guangxi. The local people liked Bai and considered him a sincere and good-hearted person. A short time later Bai married. The next year a little daughter was born to Bai and his wife.

In the year of 1854 the French missionary Auguste Chapdelaine visited Guangxi and started preaching the Gospel. Bai was strangely drawn both to the foreigner and his strange teachings. He followed him around for weeks, listening intently to every word and observing that the words matched the quality of the Frenchman's life. Bai gradually became convinced of the truth of the gospel and

decided to follow Christ.

Just ten days after his baptism, on February 24, 1856, a mob of one hundred armed men descended on Yaoshan village to capture Chapdelaine. Bai managed to escape, but while in hiding he decided to return to the village to see how he could help. He agreed to lodge a protest with the local magistrate. Others expressed concern for his safety, but the brave new Christian assured them, "Why, what are you afraid of? If it is necessary for us to die, let us have no fear in offering our lives for the glory of God." At the court, instead of hearing their petition, the magistrate had Bai beaten and chained. When the judge threatened to cut off his head if he refused to abandon his faith, Bai Xiaomin boldly replied,

"You can cut off my head, and not only mine, but also those of my wife and children; but to renounce my religion, the religion of the Lord of heaven—to give up offering my humble prayers and adorations to Him, oh no! I will never be guilty of such treachery! Cut off my head if you will, but I will never be an apostate."

This response infuriated the magistrate, who ordered that Bai be severely flogged and tortured. One account states, "Several times he passed out under the torture but he persevered in his faith. When physical force failed, the magistrate sentenced him to death. On his way to execution, Bai Xiaomin met his mother-in-law and bade her farewell. The place where he was beheaded was just outside the southern gate of the town. His remains were left in the wilderness there to be eaten by wild animals."

CHINA CHILDREN'S PROJECT UPDATE

Current Total: 1,139 Sunday School Teachers Trained and Equipped.



Thank you for the generous response to this strategic project to reach China's children for Christ. Each teacher, on average, is expected to train 100 children and establish them in the Word of God. Those attending the training have their travel costs covered, and a set of materials given to

them for free. These materials include a children's Bible, teacher's manual, 18 teaching books with visual aids, 15 hours of VCD (video cassette disc) teaching, and 6 CDs of 'Children's Heavenly Songs'. The total cost of \$47 per set includes printing and production, and training expenses. We recently received the following testimonies from coworkers involved with the China Children's Project:

"For the three days we had Bible teaching starting from the creation. There were 70 children and teenagers present. Some of them were already Christians, but most of them were not. When the teachers taught about the cross of Jesus and led them to pray, most of them wanted to be saved. They prayed in tears: 'Jesus you died for my sins, please forgive me.' Jesus touched their hearts and many of them want to serve the Lord when they grow up. We baptized 24 of them."

"There was a twelve year old boy who had a wound on his leg which became more and more painful. It was diagnosed as cancer and he needed to stay in the hospital. Daily he became worse and was so unhappy that he even stopped talking. One day a Sunday School teacher came and talked with him about Jesus. She gave him a Wonderful Story Book and asked him to read it carefully every day. The boy took it and read it again and again. He also prayed the salvation prayer printed on the last page. His mother saw a difference. Even though her son was in severe pain he was peaceful and his face was shining. He told his mother, 'I don't feel pain anymore, because when Jesus was on the cross for my sins, his pain was much worse.' Finally the day came when he went to the place where he could see Jesus face to face and suffer no more pain or tears. On the day of the funeral, his mother said, 'I want to put this Wonderful Story Book with him. It was so dear to him and made him happy. I thank Jesus.'"